

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 53 have been canceled, with new claims 54 - 72 presented for the Examiner's consideration. Consideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Newly submitted claims 54 - 72 each recite that the pressured fluid from the air press first passes through the molding fabric and then through the first fabric. Support for the new claims can be found throughout the specification and particularly in Figures 1, 2, and 3 and their associated discussion. Additional support for the claims can be found in the definitions located within the Summary of the Invention. No new matter is believed to be introduced by the new claims.

The above claims are believed novel and non-obvious with regard to *Hada*, WO 99/23301, which was previously applied by the Examiner in Serial No. 10/199,778. *Hada* discloses that the wet web is sandwiched between a support fabric and a forming fabric (both relatively smooth fabrics) while traveling through the air press. Molding of the wet web in *Hada* occurs much later in the process by means of the through air dryer fabric as shown in Figure 1. The Applicants' claims recite that a molding fabric and a first fabric are sandwiched together and traveling through the air press.

Furthermore, the new claims are non-obvious since the air press is installed to direct the air through the molding fabric first and then through the first fabric. That moves or forces the wet web away from the molding fabric while traveling through the air press. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been expected to install the air press in the opposite manner to improve molding of the wet web by forcing the wet web into the molding fabric rather than away from it to better mold the wet web by the use of the air pressure. However, the Applicants have discovered that by decoupling the molding process from the dewatering process, an improved paper web can be made. Thus, the air press dewateres the wet web by supporting the wet web on the first fabric (in specific embodiments a forming fabric or a support fabric) and then later in the process molding the wet web by passing the wet web through a pressure roll nipping the molding fabric and the wet web together against the drying cylinder. Thus, dewatering occurs in the air press and molding of the web occurs at the pressure roll. The decoupling of the two processes allows for optimization of each process separately within the paper machine in order to produce an improved tissue product from the inventive process.

Please charge any prosecutorial fees which are due to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. deposit account number 11-0875.

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Respectfully submitted,

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I, Lanette Burton, hereby certify that on March 17, 2004, this paper or fee is being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office To Addressee" service under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above with an "Express Mail" Mailing Label Number of ET 878 513 512 US and is addressed to Mail Stop Patent Application, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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